

**MARK, ENGLS, LENIN, STALIN AND MAO ON THE PEASANTS' LAND PROBLEM**

This booklet of 164 pages is a compilation of extracts from the writings of Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin and Mao on peasants' land problem and is grouped under four main headings as follows:

- Section I. Peasantry Under Feudalism
- Section II. Bourgeoisie and Peasantry
- Section III. Proletariat and Peasantry
- Section IV. Land Problem of the Chinese Peasants.

Sections I, II and III deal almost wholly with the land problem of Russia, while Section IV contains articles written by Soviet writers and Mao Tse-tung on Chinese land problems. Since the writings of the Soviet writers can be found elsewhere in the English language, only Mao's articles have been extracted and summarized in this publication.

**A. Special Features of Feudalistic Exploitation**

Mao here describes the life of the peasants under the Chinese feudal system which existed from the period of Chou Dynasty. With regard to the economic and political structure of the time, he had the following to say:

"1. Self-sufficiency was its chief feature. The peasants produced all necessary agricultural products and tools. Land rent<sup>was</sup> paid to the landlords and nobles were <sup>mostly</sup> ~~were~~ in kind for their use rather than for marketing. Trade did not occupy a definite place in the overall economy.

"2. The emperor, nobles and landlords~~were~~ the ruling class and held most of the land. The peasants who held but little land or power were required to provide their own tools and animals to cultivate the land of the landlords and pay rent ranging from 40-70 percent of the crop.

"3. The peasants were further exploited by the ruling class by being forced to pay exorbitant taxes as well as rendering unremunerated public services. The taxes levied were, moreover, used to maintain large armies whose main task was to keep the peasants in submission.

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"4. The emperor was vested with absolute power. Locally he was usually represented by officials selected from the landlord class who abused their positions.

"5. Under the feudal system, the peasants were denied their personal freedom and political rights. They had no recourse against the abusive treatments of the ruling class who often beat them or ~~have taken~~ <sup>took</sup> their lives."

**B. Peasants Revolts and Causes of Their Failure.**

Referring to the many peasant revolts which occurred in China, Mao states that the greatest of these uprisings was "The T'ai-p'ing Rebellion" of the 19th Century. He asserts that these uprisings were caused by the resistance of the people against feudalistic oppression and that the peasant revolts in China were on a greater scale than in any other country. The peasant revolts in China, he claims, largely failed because they lacked organization and leadership and the support of the masses. He states that the success of the people's struggles for liberation can be gained only through the guidance of a progressive political party, such as the CCP.

**C. Class Differentiation of the Farmers**

In this section Mao states that the Chinese farmers are now divided into three classes as follows: (1) Rich farmers and landlords, 10 percent, (2) Middle class, 20 percent, and (3) Poor farmers and farm laborers, 70 percent.

Delving into the special characteristics of each group, Mao discusses the responsibilities of the latter two groups in the revolutionary struggle. He concludes by saying that these two groups must unite under the leadership of the proletariat in order to gain success in the revolution.

**D. Land Problem of the Chinese Peasants.**

The following articles of Mao Tse-tung are extracts from his works, "The Chinese Revolution and the CCP", "New Democracy", "Coalition Government", "On Cooperatives", "Completing the study of Economy in Two or Three Years", and "Organize", many written during the early period of the war when the CCP and KMT were united in the common struggle against the Japanese.

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1. Under the existing circumstances, our greatest enemy is the power of imperialism and semi-feudalism; that is, foreign capitalists and those who collaborate with them, the Chinese landlord class, such as Wang Ching-wei, <sup>and the puppets.</sup> ~~and~~ <sup>They are the ones who oppressed the Chinese people and</sup> hindered the progressive development of Chinese society. The greatest and most malignant oppression is foreign imperialism. While it is true that the Chinese bourgeoisie has at times suffered under imperialism, during 1927-36 they collaborated with the imperialists and the landlords and turned against the ~~CCP~~ <sup>CCP</sup> who had previously assisted them. Hence, it is understandable that the CCP should hold the propertied class responsible for the failure of the revolution and as antagonistic to the rights of the people. The enemies of the Chinese revolution are exceedingly powerful, and it is a mistake to under-estimate their strength.

2. The landlords are the cruel representatives of feudalism; they are the social basis of imperialistic rule in China. They are obstacles to political, economic and cultural progress, and yield no benefits to Chinese society. The big landlords are the most reactionary and are not protagonists but antagonists to the revolutionary cause. Small landlords and semi-bankrupt landlords are somewhat different; they may be neutral or at times on our side. This is particularly true of individuals who have severed themselves from this latter class and have educated themselves.

3. In view of the above, it is plain that our task is to attack the imperialists and overthrow the feudalistic oppressors. The people must unite in fighting against foreign imperialism and must overthrow the feudalistic oppressors through a democratic revolution. The two are different, but inseparable.

4. The Three People's Principles must be applied in policies to promote the welfare of the workers and peasants. To ignore the welfare of the peasants and workers is to invite failure. Stalin said: "The colonial and semi-colonial problem is none other than the problem of the peasants." The Chinese revolution is a peasants' revolution; it is the peasants who are resisting Japan. The policy of the New Democracy is to give the peasants their rights.

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5. ~~The~~ peasantry is the primary source of industrial workers. Peasants are also the suppliers of food for industry and the market which absorbs the products of industry. Soldiers are peasants in uniform, enemies to the death of Japanese imperialism. The peasant are the foundation of democratic government. The Chinese revolution will not succeed without the cooperation and aid of the peasantry. If the peasants are ignored, talk about the promotion of literacy, education, culture and health will lose all its meaning.

6. China must effect land reform, liberate the peasants, and solve the problems of democratic political rights and economic livelihood of the peasants. The watchword, "Land for the Tiller", must be put into effect; feudalistic shackles in the rural are ~~a~~ must be swept away. The policy must not be, however, to establish a socialistic type of agricultural economy. Rather the aim must be to change to one which is based on the private ownership of land by the peasant and in which ever the rich farmer will <sup>be</sup> permitted to live in accord with the principle of the "equalization of land rights".

7. The CCP stood for full implementation of the watchword, "Land to the tiller", but during the period of the war of resistance, it made a big concession by only urging reduction in rents and interests rates. If these measures had been put into force, the CCP <sup>was</sup> ~~would~~ prepared to support them and work toward the gradual fulfillment of the principle of "Land to the Tiller". However, those disloyal to the doctrines of Sun Yat-sen vehemently opposed to the enforcement of these reforms and although the announcement of the 25 per cent reductions in rent and interest rate was made by the KMT, no effort was made to enforce the order. Moreover, its enforcement by the CCP in the liberated areas was considered a crime.

The KMT maintains that the revolution of the Chinese people (against foreign imperialism) and the democratic revolution (against feudalism) should be prosecuted in two stages; namely, the enforcement of the former <sup>at the beginning</sup>. This is wrong for they should be carried on simultaneously since imperialism and feudalism are mutually dependent. The KMT tried to separate these two tasks and are becoming weak; the CCP is prosecuting them simultaneously and is becoming strong. For this, we have been vilified to the extreme, but is this not because we have truly sought to promote the welfare of the Chinese people?

8. For the purpose of increasing production, the CCP is promoting voluntary mutual help on a small scale between neighbors, and between neighboring <sup>villages</sup> ~~villages~~. On a larger and more formal scale, it has ventured to form a producers' cooperative societies. They have proven very successful in the liberated areas, and must be extended. The cooperatives have aided greatly in bringing new life as well as literating the peasants. They helped to increase their efficiency, which, in turn, helped to increase production. If continued success in this field can be maintained, total production might be increased by 50-100 percent.

9. When liberated from his exploiters and reduction in rent and interest rates is enforced, the farmer's interest in his work will increase. Through mutual help and cooperation, a farmer will be able to increase his production, thereby improving his economic condition. Where patience and demonstration take the place of official commands, the resultant economic improvement will be such that all the people will have learned their lesson in economics within two or three years.

10. The Chinese peasants have been struggling under the old fragmentary farm operation system which has prevailed in China for thousands of years as the economic basis of feudalistic system. As a result, they have fallen into almost permanent poverty. The only way to overcome this condition is to gradually adopt a productive system based on collectives as propounded by Lenin. The Chinese cooperatives existing in the Border Region differ from those of the Soviet Union in that the economy of China under the New Democracy is based on the principle of private ownership of property and <sup>collective</sup> ~~collective~~ labor. <sup>Collective</sup> ~~Collective~~ labor may be carried out in different forms, such as mutual labor groups, migrant labor crews, etc. In the soviet area of Kiangsi where these <sup>collective</sup> ~~collective~~ labor groups have proven very successful, they were known as "mutual aid society", and "plowing unit". The personnel composition of these groups greatly varied because the organizational structure depended upon whether the aid was to be wholly labor, partly animal labor, farm implements, or on the permanency of the organization. Creation must be based on the free volition of the masses and coercion must never be employed in the establishment of these cooperative labor groups.

Since their formation, operations have been greatly improved and the benefits to the farmers have been enormous. Every effort must be made toward their development and establishment throughout the liberated areas.

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